

Proposal for a Poster Presentation

How to Use Trishaw Rides as a Means to Activate Service Learning and the Impact to Date *Building an Ecosystem for Collaborative Good*

Marieke Bink¹, Kristine Schaan²

¹CEO, Cycling Without Age Singapore

Email address: marieke@cyclingwithoutage.sg

² Project Manager, Cycling Without Age Singapore

Email address: kristine@cyclingwithoutage.sg

Abstract:

1. Who we are – Cycling Without Age Singapore

Cycling Without Age Singapore (CWA) is a charity which brings seniors and others with limited mobility on trishaw rides. Our vision, as part of a global movement, is that everyone regardless of race, religion or resource has the right to wind in their hair. We subscribe to the United Nations goals of sustainability and are contributing to the following sustainable development goals (SDGs): good health and well-being, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, and partnerships for the goals. At our core, we aim to combat social isolation and promote intergenerational bonding through our trishaw rides.

2. How we do things

We have partnered with a range of senior care centers and nursing homes across Singapore with an emphasis on low-income seniors. We provide each senior partner with the use of a CWA trishaw and implement our program. The success of our program is heavily dependent upon our volunteer cyclists (pilots) which generously give their time to take seniors out on the trishaw rides.

We equip our pilots with two sessions of training, each encompassing three hours. The first session is the trishaw training which provides necessary skills, education on safety, and hands-on trishaw handling. The trishaws are power assisted with a battery support mechanism to enable persons of all athletic abilities to cycle the seniors. Due to the sophisticated nature of the trishaws as well as the vulnerable nature of the seniors, safety is our primary concern.

We also deeply value the relationships and opportunities for engagement between the pilots and the seniors. As such, we have developed and deployed an aging simulation and communication

skills training. This equips all of our pilots on the fundamentals of aging with a simulation which helps to develop empathy. This three hour training also provides education on communicating with seniors. Our goal is to equip our pilots with the knowledge and abilities to meaningfully engage with the seniors. By doing so, it offers the pilots the opportunity to learn about the stories, life history and wisdom each senior has to offer.

We have engaged with a number of university students to participate in our program as a means of satisfying service-learning requirements. These students are deemed youth pilots, defined as 16 to 35 years of age. The aging simulation and communication skills training was designed specifically with the youth pilots in mind. CWA recognized an opportunity to provide youth pilots with a deeper understanding and appreciation of aging while also helping to build their confidence thereby empowering them to engage with seniors.

3. **The impact of our movement**

In an effort to understand our impact, CWA recently engaged in a study facilitated by Stewart Redqueen. Our program recognizes seniors as the primary beneficiary with the pilots serving as a secondary beneficiary. As such, we sought to understand the impact on both of these beneficiaries. For the purposes of this paper, the impact presented forward will focus on the youth pilot beneficiaries.

These youth have tremendously contributed to our growth in trishaw rides. To date, over 7,000 seniors (duplicated) have experienced the joy of over 3,500 trishaw rides and much of this success is attributed to the youth pilots choosing to engage with CWA for their service learning.

To understand the impact, we deployed various avenues of collecting qualitative data from the youth pilots using interviews and surveys as the sources of data. We received responses from a total of 75 youth pilots and uncovered the following impact across five themes:

1. Enhanced communication skills
2. Increased desire to contribute to community and help others
3. Increased confidence and self-esteem
4. Enhanced relational skills and relationship bonding
5. Increased empathy and reduced stereotyping of seniors

Here are select quotes attributed to each impact theme:

Enhanced communication skills

One elderly that I will remember riding with is Mr Lee. I'm not really good at starting conversations but on that day, I had the courage to start the conversation first. I could remember vaguely what I asked Mr Lee. I asked where is the furthest he has went overseas. He said Vietnam (or Myanmar, I couldn't remember) and China.

I learnt how to communicate with the elderly regardless of race. I learnt from an elderly couple (married for 69 years, with 18 grandchildren) that to sustain a relationship, we should always be

patient, willingness to give it all with whole heart, always pray to seek for easy and steadiness for the future.

I learned how to better communicate with seniors, how to keep the conversations going and be a better listener.

Increased desire to contribute to community and help others

After attending cycling sessions I feel that I should contribute more to the community to help the elderlies.

During this project I face some difficulties like managing my time and communicating with the elderlies; however after attending cycling sessions I feel that I am able to contribute back to the society and allows me to get closer to the elderlies.

Increased confidence and self-esteem

I grew more confidence through this despite sometimes I doubt myself, and seniors and mentors will always remind me of my strength.

Enhanced relational skills and relationship bonding

I learnt from the seniors that any relationship that we have like friendships, family and Boy girl relationship. The importance of sustaining all this miraculous relationships through trust, loyalty, love, honesty, patience, understanding towards each other and lastly if you're afraid of getting hurt you can't grow and learn from that relationship.

I feel happy being able to interact with the elderlies

Increased empathy and reduced stereotyping of seniors

I realised I have been stereotyping seniors and that's not fair to them. I learnt to be more empathetic to their conditions and to be more patient.

I learned about how seniors feel, they deserve more care.

4. Ambition to scale and next steps

The aging population in Singapore will grow to 900,000 by 2030. The results of the impact study inspire us to scale our operations to meet the growing need for activities that engage seniors and promote active aging. It is our ambition to retain our current youth pilots while also recruiting additional youth pilots. We also plan to conduct a program evaluation upon hitting the one year mark of the intergenerational bonding program Moving Generations to further understand the impact on our youth pilots as well as identify opportunities to enhance their service learning experience.

Keywords: Intergenerational bonding, meaningful engagement, empathy

References: no more than 10 references.

Biographical sketch of each presenter

Presenter 1:

- Last name followed by first name: Bink Marieke
- Position/department/organisation/country: CEO, Cycling Without Age Singapore
- Short biography

As an educated nurse with a master's degree in health sciences, Marieke has over 20 years experience in health care, with a focus on home care and emergency care. She believes in the value of integrating different aspects of health care into a seamless customer experience to improve the quality and cost for care recipients. Marieke has engaged with different healthcare organizations globally in designing changes to improve service delivery.

- Contact information (address, email address, homepage)

Email: marieke@cyclingswithoutage.sg

Website: www.cyclingswithoutage.sg

Address: The Social Collider, #03-01 Blk 69 Ayer Rajah Crescent, 139961 Singapore

Presenter 2:

- Last name followed by first name: Schaan Kristine
- Position/department/organisation/country: Program Manager, Cycling Without Age Singapore
- Short biography

Kristine holds subject matter expertise in aging and longevity, a master's degree in gerontology and B.S. in health care administration. As a credentialed professional gerontologist and licensed nursing home administrator, Kristine is passionate about changing the aging narrative. She has experience developing and executing learning programs for a variety of healthcare entities and stakeholders. Prior to joining CWA Singapore, Kristine held roles serving as a Strategy Consultant and Director of Community Services.

- Contact information (address, email address, homepage)

Email: kristine@cyclingswithoutage.sg

Website: www.cyclingswithoutage.sg

Address: The Social Collider, #03-01 Blk 69 Ayer Rajah Crescent, 139961 Singapore